2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

163 [127] than the national average of 48.6 for the same period. It should be noted, however, that the birth rate varies considerably from year to year. The data in Tables 6 and 7 were obtained from the Federal Department of Statistics in Mexico City, which in turn gets its data from the municipal registry in Tepoztlán. To check on the reliability of these data I examined the local registry for the five-year period from 1939 to 1943. I found that not all births are recorded, and that many births are recorded years after the event. For example, three births which had taken place in 1926 were included in the record for 1941. Out of 284 births recorded in the register of 1939, 45 were born in other years; 42 out of 251 in 1940; 63 out of 245 in 1941; 68 out of 299 in 1942; and 64 out of 245 in 1943. In other words, of 1,324 births recorded during this five-year period, 282 were not born in the year in which they were recorded. It should be noted, however, that most of the cases were only one year late. And the fact that the procedure of including births from other years is a regular one tends to reduce the margin of error. Thus, while these statistics leave much to be desired, they do indicate general trends.

165 The average rate of infant mortality for the eleven-year period 1930 to 1940, inclusive, was 102.3 and the general mortality for the same period was 20.2. While both figures are high when compared with death rates in rural areas in the United States, it must be noted that they are considerably lower than the figures for the state of Morelos as a whole, for which the comparable figures were 133.6 and 30.2, respectively. The general mortality rates for the 31 municipios of the state of Morelos shows the municipio of Tepoztlán to be in the lowest quartile, third from the bottom, again indicating the relatively healthful location of the village. Furthermore, the infant mortality rate for Tepoztlán was also lower than for rural Mexico, which was 121 for the five-year period 1939 to 1943, inclusive.[87]

The mortality figures, like the birth figures, show a marked variation from year to year. However, the general trend for Tepoztlán was toward a sharp lowering of the mortality rate, especially in the case of infant mortality, witness the drop from 198.1 of 1930 to 59.8 in 1940. How can we explain this trend?

165 ● 744 [73] [164] Probably the most important factor in the decrease of the infant mortality rate has been the increase in and greater availability of medical services. Tepoztlán has received a good deal of attention from the Mexican Department of Health, which has carried out a fairly intensive program of inoculation. While the health officials have not succeeded in eliminating the sources of infection and epidemics in the village—witness the serious typhoid epidemic in 1940, and the measles epidemic of 1947 which killed off many children—they have taken energetic measures to control the epidemics.

165 759 Since 1930 there have been doctors residing temporarily in Tepoztlán for short periods.[88] There have been at least two *pasantes* (graduate medical students) who,

[87] Whetten, *Rural Mexico*, p. 328.

[88] From the doctors' reports on file at the Department of Health in Mexico City, it appears that rheumatism is the most frequent disease and accounted for 50 per cent of all illnesses treated. Next in frequency was benign goiter, followed by tuberculosis and enteritis.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

the state of Morelos is excellent and covers all the municipios of the state. Excursions organized by the school give the younger generation an opportunity to know their state.

The proximity of Cuernavaca, the state capital, also plays some part in developing a consciousness of being Morelenses. In Cuernavaca there are secondary and preparatory schools to which some Tepoztecan parents send their children, since the local school reaches only to the sixth grade.

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year the secretary of education makes available a number of student scholarships for advanced study outside the village. About fifty Tepoztecans have received such scholarships during the past fifteen years, and many of these students have returned to the village to teach or to carry on their work as farmers. The experience away from home makes for many changes in habits and customs, and must be reckoned as another source of culture change, though obviously a limited one.

CULTURAL MISSIONS

Paralleling the work of the school is that of the cultural missions, also a federal service, which travel throughout the country visiting peasant and Indian communities and giving instruction for adults. Tepoztlán has had a cultural mission for two years, and in 1947 the mission worked in one of the surrounding villages of the municipio. All of the members of the mission were non-Tepoztecans, again making for increased opportunities to become familiar with customs from different parts of the country. The mission taught Tepoztecans how to make beds, chairs, and other furniture; it taught the girls knitting, sewing, and crocheting; it encouraged social dancing and sports such as volleyball; it taught the women how to make inexpensive candies and preserves; it worked on improving the homes by getting a few families to build privies and to raise the hearth off the floor for more sanitary cooking. In addition, there was a doctor attached to the mission who administered inoculations and gave advice on baby care.

BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS

Most of the books which reach Tepoztlán are textbooks used in the school. One of the innovations of the Mexican government since the Revolution has been the elimination of most texts written by foreigners, and the substitution of texts written by Mexicans, which seek to arouse Mexican nationalism. Stories of the Mexican Indians have been substituted for those of children of other lands, and national heroes receive an important place in most texts dealing with history. The secretary of education has printed millions of copies of history texts which are distributed free, and some of these books have reached Tepoztecan homes.

Among other publications which occasionally reach Tepoztlán are leaflets put out by the Partido Revolucionario Mexicano (now the Partido Revolucionario

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in which the national administrative apparatus affects the daily lives of Tepoztecans will be considered here.

TAXATION

Federal taxation touches most Tepoztecans directly and is a common subject of complaint. Most Tepoztecans view it as an imposition and do not readily understand the need for taxation nor what is done with the money. In fact, Tepoztecans pay relatively little in federal taxes, primarily on the sale of charcoal, on the slaughter of animals, and on trade. Tepoztecans accept fatalistically the necessity of paying taxes, but it develops a negative and critical attitude toward the national government.

HEALTH SERVICES

The federal government has a health center in Cuernavaca which is frequented by some Tepoztecans. However, the majority, particularly the older people, do not use it because they still prefer *curanderos* and are not yet accustomed to the idea of receiving services from the state. Even the federal health workers who come into the village from time to time to administer inoculations against communicable disease are endured by most villagers out of "respect" for the great power of the government, rather than because of an understanding of their services.

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

The Departamento Agrario intervenes directly in the affairs of Tepoztecans who hold land under the *ejido* program. Federal authority is the final authority which resolves problems or conflicts concerning *ejido* lands. But here, too, many Tepoztecans see in the agrarian authorities an imposition rather than a system of public service. As we have shown earlier, the nationalization of the communal lands has lessened local control, and this has not been well accepted. Tepoztecans do not yet understand the need for national control of forest resources, especially when such control conflicts with their local interests.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

Perhaps the clearest form in which the Tepoztecan peasant sees the power of the federal government is in the federal troops. Almost as a matter of tradition, Tepoztecans have viewed soldiers with strong suspicion and dislike, and have fought attempts to conscript their sons. However, the attitude toward federal troops today is quite different from that shown toward the Federales of the Díaz regime. Today the troops stationed in the village fraternize with the population; and though they are "respected" there is less of the fear that existed during the Díaz regime. Federal troops have been sent to the village on a number of occasions in recent years, once in connection with resistance to conscription during the early part of World War II, and again when local political contests resulted in violence.

3:Lewis E-5 (1943-1957) 1960
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177 aged foods, mostly to the employed people who live in the center. Old women
511 sold ready-made tortillas in the plaza. There was still no restaurant but there
[265] were more saloons. A blare of radios came from the houses and inside some
[275] homes one saw a new kerosene or Coleman stove, aluminum pots, kerosene or gasoline lamps, forks, and hand presses for shaping tortillas. At least one home had overstuffed furniture.

But many more changes have occurred than meet the eye. As a
[161] result of the population increase—from 3,500 in 1940 to approximately 4,800
[362] in 1957—there is a shortage of housesites and housing, and Tepoztecans petitioned the local government to make available some of the nearby communal lands for new housesites. Several homes have been built on the outskirts of the village and in the surrounding *cerros*. Formerly it was not customary to rent
[427] a house; if a Tepoztecan had an extra house he would allow another villager to use it simply for the care of it. Now rental has become quite usual.

177 Since the late forties Tepoztlán has had a resident doctor and since
[759] 1952 a doctor from Cuernavaca who formerly practiced in the village has come once a week to see his patients. The clientele of both doctors has been increasing. In 1950, the resident doctor had an average of 75 patients a
[278] month; by 1956 the average was 160. Tepoztecans now complain about the expense of medicines and the delay caused by having prescriptions filled in Cuernavaca; the local "druggist" cannot fill prescriptions and carries few
[743] patent medicines. The village has a free federal government health clinic
[744] which cares for children and pregnant women and administers injections. About ten patients, most of them expectant mothers, come there every day.
[751] In 1955 approximately two thousand vaccinations and revaccinations were given.

177 The clinic and the doctor have by no means replaced the *curanderos*,
757 however. Tepoztecans believe that doctors can cure only certain diseases,
753 and still frequent *curanderos* for those illnesses which they attribute to *los*
[759] *aires*, anger, hot or cold foods, evil eye, and sorcery. Most births are still
[844] attended by the native midwives. If the doctor happens to cure an illness thought to be caused by *los aires*, this is taken as proof that the *aires* were not truly the cause. Although the villagers have substituted new terms for old concepts—for example, *los aires* are now sometimes described as tiny animals or microbes and injections are called "cleansings"—it is questionable whether this represents much of a departure from the earlier magical thinking about the causes of disease.

177 Like many villages in the densely populated central plateau area, Tep-
241 oztlán has not had the benefit of the great new hydroelectric and irrigation
[312] projects. Its agricultural base has remained very much the same; there has
[377] been no mechanization and no new important cash crops have been introduced. The peasants continue to work their land as before, although a few
[464] are now using some commercial fertilizer. Because the lack of change in agriculture combined with the rapidly increasing population has forced Tepoztecans to seek work in nonfarm occupations, a much lower proportion of the gain-
[314] fully occupied are now peasants. The federal campaign for the preservation of

5: Lewis E-5 (1943-1944, 1947-1948) 1955
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Second, as we shall see, there are good reasons for believing that much the same thing would have happened even if the service had been excellent and the physical facilities exemplary. Although we cannot discount completely the effect of dissatisfaction over the quality of the clinical service, it will become apparent that other forces at work in Tepoztlán exerted greater influence. To discern the nature of these forces we must look to the general climate of the village, particularly the medical and political climate.

The Medical Climate of Tepoztlán

The trial clinic on the central plaza of Tepoztlán was not introduced into a medical vacuum. On the contrary, it found itself within a milieu of well-established medical beliefs and theories of disease and within a network of traditional practitioners whose curative techniques reflected these beliefs and theories.

There are three kinds of health practitioners in Tepoztlán—curanderos, *mágicos*, and "el doctor." Curanderos are the most numerous and are primarily women. They are visited most frequently and charge small fees of 25 or 50 centavos. There are two mágicos, men who may use the herb remedies of the women but also resort to spiritualism and magic and are feared for their great power. Their fees are higher, ranging between one and ten pesos. The curanderos and mágicos are, of course, Tepoztecans. However, "el doctor" is an outsider who has taken up residence in the village. He poses as a doctor but has no professional training. He charges fees as high as 100 pesos. Curanderos are sometimes paid in corn or other produce. This is one of the very few remnants of the old barter economy and indicates how closely the curandero system and the native economy were integrated. With the increasing dominance of a money economy there is now more cash available, and some families visit the doctors in Cuernavaca.

There was no resident doctor in 1943, but the villagers had had some previous experience with doctors and modern medicine. Two young Mexican doctors had spent six months each in the village in fulfillment of their training requirements for the doctor's degree. Public health teams had visited the village frequently since 1936 to administer injections against infectious diseases;

5: Lewis E-5 (1943-1944, 1947-1948) 1955
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some Tepoztecans had visited the federal Public Health Station in nearby Cuernavaca, and a few of the local midwives had received some instruction from public health nurses.

For the majority of people, however, indigenous folk medicine as practiced by curanderos is still the dominant form of medicine. Thus, the traditional remedies for "evil eye" and "fright" involve a combination of folk beliefs, ancient herbal lore, and Catholic practice. A child is believed to be the victim of the evil eye if he comes home crying and very much disturbed. An egg is broken into a glass and if a long eye-shaped spot appears on the yolk, the person responsible for putting the eye upon the child is a man; if the spot is round, it is a woman. The child's clothes are changed and he is "cleansed" with a soiled kerchief or shirt if the guilty person was male, and with an apron or shawl if a female. Some children are cured by being cleansed on their foreheads, with the tongue making the form of a cross.

"Fright" is an illness which leaves children sad and pale; it is cured by women who can "lay the shadow" that afflicts them. These curanderos keep a supply of powdered cedar, palm, and blessed laurel which they throw on the forehead, breast, wrists, palms of the hand, nape of the neck, and into the nostrils of the sick child. While this is being done the woman prays the Credo, and at the end holds the child's head and cries out that the shadow should withdraw and that the child no longer need be frightened. Some cure fright by having the priest read the gospel over the child in the presence of the child's godparent of the same sex.

The most celebrated healer in Tepoztlán is one Rosalino Vargas, known as Don Rosas. He is also believed to be a powerful sorcerer and is feared by many of the villagers. Some people claim to have seen him riding through the village at midnight wearing a long black cape, with sparks issuing from his eyes and mouth. Don Rosas, who often uses the fear he inspires to his own advantage, has several enemies, at least three of whom made attempts to murder him in recent years. Don Rosas is wealthy and has a flourishing practice. He has seven female assistants; there is much gossip to the effect that these women are his paramours who sleep with him in turn, one for each day in the week. Don Rosas' loyal